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Message Text

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67
ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: PRESS INTERVIEW OF CSU BUNDESTAG LANDESGRUPPE CHAIRMAN

1. CSU BUNDESTAG "LANDESGRUPPE" CHAIRMAN RICHARD STUECKLEN MADE THE FOLLOWING NOTEWORTHY COMMENTS ON CDU/CSU ELECTION STRATEGY IN PRESS INTERVIEW AT MUNICH PRESS CLUB LATE AFTER-NOON NOVEMBER 10:

(A) CDU/CSU "MANNSCHAFT" - STUECKLEN SAID THAT CSU SUP-PORTS IDEA OF "MANNSCHAFT" (MINI-SHADOW CABINET) WHICH DOES NOT RPT NOT EXCEED SIX PERSONS AND IS COMPRISED OF KOHL, STRAUSS, STOLTENBERG, CARSTENS, KATZER AND DREGGER. HE QUICKLY ADDED THAT PUBLIC SHOULD BE MADE AWARE THAT CDU AND CSU HAVE MANY OTHER EXCELLENT PEOPLE SUCH AS "BIEDENKOPF, BARZEL, SCHNEIDER AND VON WEIZSAECKER."

(B) CDU/CSU ELECTION PLATFORM - STUECKLEN INDICATED THAT CDU AND CSU LEADERSHIP HAD AGREED ON BASIC APPROACH TO KEY ISSUES AT JUNE 10 AND 19 (1975) MEETINGS. THE SISTER PARTIES WERE NOT ABLE AT THAT TIME TO REACH FULL ACCORD ON ISSUES OF CODETERMINATION (MITBESTIMMUNG) AND WORKER ACCUMULATION OF ASSETS (VERMOEGENSBILDUNG). STUECKLEN SAID IT WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE AN "ACCIDENT" IF
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THE TWO PARTIES WERE TO COME OUT WITH SEPARATE PLATFORMS

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FOR 1976 ELECTIONS. HE ALSO STATED THAT KOHL COULD ACT AS JOINT CDU/CSU SPOKESMAN ONLY AFTER THE TWO PARTIES' VIEWS ON ISSUES IN QUESTION HAD BEEN HARMONIZED.

(C) CSU VIEWS ON A "FOURTH PARTY" - ADDRESSING QUESTION OF FOURTH PARTY, STUECKLEN MADE IT CLEAR THAT CSU DOES NOT RPT NOT INTEND TO SET UP CSU ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE BAVARIA. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT CSU MIGHT STILL EXERCISE OPTION OF SUBMITTING "LANDESLISTE" FOR 1976 ELECTIONS IN OTHER LAENDER, FOR EXAMPLE NORTH-RHINE WESTPHALIA (NRW). HE JUSTIFIED THIS BY ARGUING THAT SINCE CDU/CSU CHANCES OF WINNING 51 PERCENT OF BUNDESTAG SEATS ARE "THIN," ESTABLISHMENT OF CSU "LANDESLISTE" IN NRW, WHICH MIGHT WIN 10 PERCENT OF VOTE THERE, WOULD ENHANCE UNION'S CHANCES OF ATTAINING ABSOLUTE MAJORITY. (STUECKLEN WAS CAREFUL TO SPECIFY THAT CSU WOULD DO THIS ONLY IF PUBLIC OPINION POLLS INDICATE THAT CSU'S 10 PER CENT OF NRW VOTE WOULD COME FROM DISSATISFIED FDP VOTERS, OTHER CONSERVATIVE VOTERS WHO WOULD NOT VOTE CDU, AND PERHAPS SOME DISSATISFIED SPD VOTERS.

(D) BIEDENKOPF - STUECKLEN PLAYED DOWN STRAUSS-BIEDENKOPF DIFFERENCES, STATING FLATLY THAT BOTH MEN SUPPORT THE FUNDAMENTAL MORAL PRINCIPLES OF THE AHLENER PROGRAM BUT REALIZE THAT ITS PRACTICAL PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN REPLACED BY THE DUSSELDORF GUIDELINES (LEITSAETZE).

2. COMMENT: STUECKLEN'S FORMULATION OF CSU POSITION ON "MANNSCHAFT" SEEMS AIMED AT EXCLUDING BIEDENKOPF FROM UNION'S INFLUENTIAL INNER GROUP WHILE PLACATING HIM BY DESCRIBING HIM AS ONE OF UNION'S MOST TALENTED MEMBERS WHO IS THUS QUALIFIED TO ASSUME CABINET POSITION. IT SEEMS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT CSU WOULD ACTUALLY PREPARE INDEPENDENT PLATFORM; STUECKLEN'S COMMENTS ON THIS TOPIC CAN BE INTERPRETED AS REMINDER THAT WHILE CSU AGREES WITH CSU ON MOST ISSUES, IT WILL CONTINUE TO ADOPT POSITION TAILORED TO ITS OWN INTERESTS ON ISSUES SUCH AS MITBESTIMMUNG. STUECKLEN'S REFERENCES TO FOURTH PARTY QUESTION CAN BE READ AS ATTEMPT TO CALL KOHL'S ATTENTION TO FACT THAT THERE MAY BE RESERVE OF UP TO
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10 PER CENT OF POTENTIAL CDU VOTERS IN OTHER LAENDER, E.G. NRW, WHICH CDU COULD ATTRACT BY ADOPTING MORE CONSERVATIVE POLICIES.
PETERSON

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